Increasing Coconut Production in Coastal Areas of Gujarat

*166. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have studied the possiblity of increasing production of coconut platnation in the coastal areas of Gujarat State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Research Centres to study ways of increasing productivity of coconut plantation in coastal areas of Saurashtra and Kutchh Region of Gujarat State?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, coastal areas of Gujarat State possess considerable potential for coconut production and as per state estimates, already over 15,000 hectares have been covered under the crop in the state. Coconut Board is providing assistance for new planting in the current plan.

(c) Research work being carried out at the Agriculture Research Station, Mahuwa, Distt. Bhavnagar has helped in identifying elite local variety, evaluation of other hybrids and varieties, standardising of agronomical and plant protection practices etc. for improving productivity of coconut which is being promoted among the farmers.

Recommendations of Selja Committee

*167. SHRI MISA R. GANESAN:
SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the Selja Committee recommendations with regard to the functioning of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan;

(b) whether Government have since accepted the said recommendations with or without certain modifications; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the form of the recommendations that have since been accepted?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) The Review Committee, in its report of May' 95 has made 49 recommendations covering all the areas of Kendriya Vidyalayas Sangathan functioning, including its management structure, administrative, financial and academic functioning. A copy of the Report of the Review Committee including its recommendations has been placed in the Parliament Library.

The Govt. has accepted most of the recommendations made by the Review Committees. The major recommendations as accepted by the Govt. are:—

(i) The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan Board and Society should be re-organised to give better representation to Armed Force, Project Sector and similar organisations.

(ii) Delegation of powers should be reviewed to enable most of school/ regional level matters to be decided at those levels.

(iii) Vidyalaya Management Committees should be given some functional powers.

(iv) Regional Recruitment Boards should be set up to make selection of employees quick and efficient.

(v) Transfer and posting policy needs to be realigned.

(vi) Computerised information system should be set up to cover all three levels; Head-office, Regional offices and schools.

(vii) Teaching at primary level should be re-organised and made more congenial.

(viii) Home work in lower classes should be stopped, junior laboratory should be provided in all schools and grading should replace marking up class-VIII.

(ix) Zonal Training Institutes should be set up for in-service training.

(x) Physical education and sports should be vigorously pursued as compulsory subjects.

Transfer of IDPL to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

*168. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to transfer the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., now under the administrative control of Ministry of Chemicals Fertilizers, to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare so that the consumer and producer are in the same Ministry;

(b) whether a number of Members of Parliament have submitted a memorandum to the Minister regarding this; and

(c) if so, what is the decision of the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The case made out was that the transfer of IDPL to the administrative control of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare would make the company eligible for preferential treatment from that Ministry, particularly in regard to getting orders for medicines required for the National Health Programmes. The issues were examined in consultation with the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Both the Ministries are of the considered opinion that the transfer of IDPL to the administrative control of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare would not meet the objectives sought to be achieved.

Total Reserves of Iron Ore Deposits in Bailadila Iron Ore Mines

*169. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the total reserves of iron ore deposits in the Bailadila iron ore mine of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) how does it compare in quality of iron ore deposits vis-a-vis other parts of the country;

(c) whether it is a fact that as reported in the Press, a part of this mine is being developed in Joint Sector by a private company;

(d) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(e) the procedure followed in the selection of this private party?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) As per information available from Indian Bureau of Mines, total recoverable reserves of iron ore in the Bailadila area are 954.36 million tonnes.

(b) When compared with deposits in other parts of the country, Bailadila has the largest reserves of high grade iron ore (65% Fe) placed at 508.62 million tonnes.

(c) to (e): Steel consumption is one of the major indices of industrial and economic growth of a country. The total demand for steel in India, including estimated exports, is projected to grow to 37 million tonnes by 2001-02, by which time production from the existing integrated steel plants and units in secondary sector is expected to reach about 24 million tonnes. The projected gap of 13 million tonnes will have to be met only by private sector investment as establishment of new greenfield plants in public sector is not contemplated. The private sector will, therefore, have to be encouraged if the projected gap between demand and availability is to be met.

Indigenous availability of metal scrap is low and large quantities have to be imported in order to meet indigenous demand. Sponge iron contains a large percentage of metallic iron and is a very good substitute for steel melting scrap. Production of sponge iron is, therefore, being encouraged by the Government in order to conserve foreign exchange. There are 18 sponge iron units in the country at present with total capacity of 5.4 million tonnes. These units produced 3.4 million tonnes in 1994-95 and the production is expected to cross the 4 million tonnes mark this year, with exports expected to touch the one million mark. More sponge